

- A similar but smaller scale is present on the tips of the lower mandibles. One of the young birds opened its mouth for food and made the characteristic rattling sound of young wood-peckers.
- March 21st No important change. Nestlings still quiet naked but stronger. The elbows of the legs have a peculiar swollen comb-like serrated appearance behind.
- „ 22nd Birds still naked. One is only about half the size of the others.
- „ 23rd No great change.
- „ 24th Only two birds in the nest. The small one must have died and been removed by the parents.
- „ 25th Young birds growing rapidly. Otherwise no change.
- „ 26th „ „ „
- „ 27th Eyes just opening. Also „ feathers and quills „ just beginning to show.
- „ 28th Feathers developing, especially a curious band or strip across the thigh.
- „ 29th Further development.
- „ 30th A tinge of red appearing on crown.
- „ 31st to April 3rd. Steady development in feathering.
- April 4th Red caps and orange backs conspicuous.
- „ 5th to 8th Gradual full development of feather tracts. Birds very noisy.
- „ 9th Both birds left the nest.

The nest box cavity was not enlarged by the parent birds. It was throughout kept scrupulously clean. This surprised me as I always understood that the removal of the feces of the young was performed by Passerine birds only.

No droppings or dirt of any kind were found in the nest until the last day before the birds left the nest.

The young never returned to the nest after leaving it.

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GULMARG, KASHMIR.

#### No. XXIV.—NOTES ON THE NESTING OF THE HIMALAYAN TREE CREEPER (*CERTHIA HIMALAYANA*).

The following note on the nesting of the Himalayan Tree Creeper (*Certhia himalayana*) may be of interest. Blanford, in the Fauna of British India, and also Hume, in Nests and Eggs, state this bird nests high up in tall trees, 40' to 50' from the ground. I have found three nests of this bird here, and they have all been quite low down near the ground. It is an early breeder, March and April, at least they must commence building in March. I had no experience of this bird's habits, so judging from the above authors' notes I spent hours watching them in hopes of discovering their nests, but failed to see them breeding till by accident I discovered the nest.

On the 19th April I was sitting in the shade of a pine tree, when two creepers flew on to the next tree, each with an insect in its bill. They were much excited, peeping at me round the trunk of the pine, then one bolder than the other, flew down to the tree I sat near, and disappeared round the trunk. A few seconds later it went off without the insect, and shortly after the second bird did the same; when they had left I examined the trunk and found a large piece of the bark was detached from the stem, and on touching this to look behind, it came away disclosing the nest of 3 nearly full grown young ones. They all flew out, and there was also one adled egg. I replaced one chick, the only one I could find. The nest was situated only 2 ft. from the ground and composed of a few

soft feathers, etc., placed on top of coarse material such as dark chips and other stuff to fill up the cavity.

The 2nd nest was in a nearly similar situation behind the partly detached bark of a dead cherry tree, about three feet from the ground and of like materials. This nest was also discovered by seeing the parent birds feeding their young. After the young had flown (I did not like to examine the nest for fear the chicks might be too young to fly) I examined the nest and found one addled egg. This was on 14th May.

The 3rd nest was destroyed by woodcutters breaking off the detached piece of bark behind which the nest was built. The remnants of the nest with a broken egg lay at the foot of the tree which led to its discovery. The site was only a foot from the ground, on a large pine tree at the edge of a foot path.

Had I known these birds built so low down I might have discovered them earlier. My experience may assist others in further observations.

I also saw a pair feeding their young very high up on a huge pine tree, so they do not always build low down, but I should think a number must, as subitane pieces of detached bark are more likely to be found low than high up on trees.

RANIKHET, U. P.  
10th August 1922.

F. FIELD.

#### No. XXV.—SOME NOTES ON THE METHOD EMPLOYED IN CATCHING CROCODILES IN SOUTH INDIA.

I enclose a photo taken of two Valans with a crocodile captured by them with their queer instruments which if you care to publish may be of interest to some of your readers.



These Valans and Katal Arayan are fishing castes of the Cochin and Travancore States. The name Valan is derived from Vala, meaning fish in a tank. The method employed by the two particular men who I witnessed catch this crocodile is novel and exciting to say the least of it. These Valans are, for their